Cursed by Darkness

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Cursed by Darkness

by Lady_of_Moon_Over_Silver_Seas

Summary

What drove Will to abandon Louisiana for Baltimore?
Was it truly an inability to fire his weapon?
Or was it something Darker?

Graves

A dark-haired man clad in a black long-sleeved Muggle t-shirt sat hunched over his desk, a brown leather trench coat hooked over the back of his chair. He grimaced in distaste and ran one hand through his short tangled hair, while his right continued scrawling its way across the paper of the report he was irritatedly filling out. Letting out a heavy sigh, he set his fountain pen to one side and took a deep swallow of the cup of rapidly cooling coffee sitting by his left elbow. He startled upright as a shout rang through the bullpen, “Graves! Lopez!”

He lurched to his feet, swinging the coat onto his back as he stepped quickly away from his desk, paced by a coffee skinned woman from the desk facing his own, “Captain?” They came to a halt at the door of the Office for the Auror Captain in Charge of the Louisiana Area, and his five-foot nothing companion spoke in her whiskey roughened voice.

The Captain stared at them, his balding blonde hair in mild disarray, before focusing on Graves, “I’m told you have experience with the Loup-Garou Community?”

Graves ignored the disgusted look on his partner’s face, “I do Sir.”

The Captain hummed, “May I ask how?”

Graves sighed, and ran a hand through his hair, “MACUSA was founded in 1693 as you know Sir. What is less common knowledge is that House Fleascán assisted in the Founding.”

He hesitated and Lopez spoke up, “What? Grandfather never spoke of that.”

Graves grimaced, “He wouldn’t. House Fleascán were, at the time, aside from the youngest daughter, Loup-Garou. With a Lineage tracing all the way back to eight-forty-five, when Ylva Tunglsdottir was born shortly after the Viking Invasion of England led by Ragnar Lothbrok.” Graves shrugged, “She mated Athaulf Fleascán, and the Lineage can be traced down from there. They wandered Europe and the East for a time, before entering America sometime in the late fifteenth, early sixteenth century, swiftly becoming the most powerful pack in the country, even if only a handful were of the Blood.”

The Captain ignored Lopez’s sneer as he stared at Graves, “I don’t see how that relates to you. The House went extinct…”

Graves gave a wry smile, “House Fleascán has never passed the Family Name to the Bitten. Ours is a House held by Blood.” Lopez and the Captain stared at him, one with horror on her face, the other with dawning comprehension. “Estrella Citlali Fleascán was born fully human. She married Percival Gondolphus Graves, and it is from them that the Line of Graves continues to this day.” He grimaced, “I have respect within the Community because I can trace my Line back to a Pure-blooded Loup-Garou House. One descended from the Gift of Fenrir, not the Curse of Lycaon.” He gave the Captain a stare out of cold blue eyes, bare of even the faintest hint of amber, “May I ask why my Lineage is of import?”

The Captain grimaced, “We received word that the so-called Dark Lord *Voldemort?*” He gave a small shrug, “Ridiculous name. Anyway, he has apparently sent one of his own Loup-Garou to recruit from among the locals.”

Graves tensed, “Name?”

Lopez sneered, “What does it matter? They’re all Dark Creatures anyway. Kill them all and we have nothing to worry about.”

Graves shot her a disgusted look, as the Captain continued, “Fenrir Greyback I believe.” Graves let out a low growl, which he quickly stifled at the shocked look it triggered. The Captain frowned slightly, before focusing on Lopez, “The Loup-Garou may be Dark Creatures Lopez, but they are Citizens none the less. Which means we still owe them their Rights.” As Lopez reluctantly nodded, he turned back to Graves, “Wilhelm? You recognise the name?”

Graves nodded, “I do Sir.” He grimaced, his voice dropping in pitch until it was an ugly mockery of his usual tone, “My great great grandfather, and his great grandmother were siblings. He was born Gaheris Arthur Graves, but he cast that name aside after he managed to get himself Bitten by one of the then-Alphas of Britain. The Family disowned him after his predilections came to light.” Graves grimaced, “He is no Loup-Garou.”

Lopez sneered, “Of course he is!”

The Captain just watched as Graves continued to speak, his voice back to his normal tones, “No. He is a Werewolf. Nothing more.”

The Captain cocked his head to one side, “There is a difference?”

“Aye. The Werewolf are those *converted* to the Curse of Lycaon. They are never Born only Bitten. Loup-Garou are those born of the lines of Fenrir, Romulus or Remus, among others. Generally the only way one can be *converted* to their ranks is if they receive a Mating Bite. Otherwise they are more akin to Animagi than Weres.” He shot Lopez a glare at her snort, “They are not contagious, only a Mate can be turned.” He paused, “As far as I’m aware, the only exception is if one bearing the Curse of Lycaon is accepted into a Pack. If they’re willing, their Wolf slowly shifts, until they are indistinguishable from the Loup-Garou around them.” A small smile pulled at his lips, “That is not to say they aren’t dangerous, because they are, just that they are distinct from the creature my distant cousin has willingly become.”

Orders

Chapter Summary

Wilhelm and Lopez receive their orders, and Wilhelm lets slip his position in the local Pack's hierachy.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Captain stared at him for a moment, assessing the degree of rage he could feel emanating from the young Graves Scion, before speaking, “Fortunate then, that I intend to send the two of you in pursuit.” A feral grin spread across young Wilhelm’s lips as the Captain continued, “Lopez. You’re in charge, but I expect you to listen to Graves in regard to the Loup-Garou at least.” He ignored her disgruntled expression, “He has more experience than you in terms of how the Packs work.” He paused, assessing the two of them, “I don’t care if you bring Greyback in dead or alive… just make sure he doesn’t spread his *Master’s* ideals any further than you have to.” Lopez sneered, and swept from the office, but Graves hesitated. The Captain cocked his head to one side, “Yes Graves?”

The younger man hesitated, white teeth biting his lower lip, before finally speaking, “Are you sure she’s the best option Sir? I sincerely doubt Alpha Mariloup is going to approve of her.”

The Captain shrugged, “She’s the only one available that I trust not to be either swayed by the rhetoric of the *Death-Eaters* or afraid in the face of a beast like Greyback.”

Graves grimaced, “Just as long as Bleiz doesn’t take offence. He’s a pain to deal with on the best of days… telling him a souillé is here, even if you discount his purpose…” Graves rubbed the bridge of his nose, a pained smile on his face as he huffed, “Let’s just say you’ll more than likely wind up with the *dead* part of dead or alive.”

The Captain arched a brow, “That’s interfering in the Course of Justice.”

Graves shook his head, “It’s Pack Justice. Our Penal Code actually allows for the Loup-Garou to carry out their own code of law, as long a member of House Fleascán, or their appointed intermediary, is made aware of the act.” He snorted, “Why do you think I get dragged to the Preserve during my days off so much? I may not be a Fleascán by name, but the genes I *do* hold are sufficient for me to qualify as an Enforcer.”

“Enforcer?”

Graves grimaced, “Essentially I’m an Auror for them as well as for you. Only I just have to assess the facts they provide me with to confirm if a punishment is deserved. The Alpha takes it from there. I just have to stand witness.” He turned to leave, “I’ll do what I can to hold

Bleiz off, but I make no promises, as I suspect that he'll be Greyback's first port of call." Graves strode out of the office, leaving an intrigued superior behind him, as he caught up with his irritated partner.

Chapter End Notes

Google Translate:

souillé - tainted one (French)

Fleascán-Son

Chapter Summary

Contact is made with the Lulana Pack Second.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Lopez led Will from the building, “Shall we get in touch with this *Pack* of yours then?”

Her companion grimaced, “I can get us an audience with the Alpha of the Lulana Pack.” He paused, shooting her a pained glance, “I suggest you let me do the talking though.”

She shot him a sneer, “Why? Afraid I’ll offend your half-breed *friends*?”

Will grimaced, *‘Why do I have to deal with her? Couldn’t I have taken Smith instead?’*, before letting out a low sigh, “No, Lopez, it’s because I know the customs and etiquette. Mariloup may be one of the more forgiving Alphas in the State, but her second is not, and we’ll need his help if we want to track Greyback down with any degree of speed.” Lopez sneered at him, but gave a jerky nod. Will sighed and held out his arm for an apparition, an arm she reluctantly took. Will closed his eyes and took a single step forward, twisting on his heel as he did so.

They reappeared on an islet in the middle of the nearby swamp. Lopez shook free of his arm and shot their surroundings a narrow-eyed sneer, “What the hell Graves? Where the fuck are we?” Will sighed and shifted his posture, going from the steady persona she was used to him wearing at work to a more predatory figure, as he slipped a bone pendant from beneath the neck of his shirt, allowing the brown tinted carvings to show in the light. Will sank to a seat on a rock on the edge of the clearing, and settled in for a wait, eyes unfocused, as Lopez continued to stomp around the clearing, glaring and muttering under her breath as she went.

After a time, a low chuckle emerged from the swamp directly in front of Will’s position, and a slight copper skinned man, clad in a pair of tatty shorts and t-shirt, leapt across a series of concealed stepping stones, coming to a stop on the edge of the island. Lopez snarled, and pointed her wand at him, but Will merely raised his head, his blue eyes suddenly piercing and cold. “Beta Bleiz.”

The man froze, and raised his head, tilting it to one side to bare his neck, “Fleascán-Son Wilhelm.” He shifted his position, as Will motioned for Lopez to lower her wand, “What does the Fleascán-Son require of the Lulana?”

Will rose to his feet, suddenly graceful here in the wilderness, “I am not here as a respresentative of my Bloodline alone.” He met Bleiz’s eyes with a grim expression, “We are here to warn the Alpha of a threat to the Pack’s security.”

Bleiz frowned, shooting a puzzled look at the obviously uncomfortable Lopez, “And your companion?”

She sneered at him, as Will spoke, ignoring her presence, “Auror Lopez and I were assigned by our Captain to seek out the source of the threat. We are here to warn the Alpha and to learn of any news the Pack may have regarding this individual.”

Bleiz frowned, “Very well. Fleascán-Son Wilhelm, you have permission to bring the inconnu into Pack Territory.” He paused, “But you are responsible for her behaviour.” Will inclined his head and motioned for Lopez to follow them as he and Bleiz made their way back across the stepping stones to were a canoe waited, hidden under a disillusionment charm, behind a cluster of trees.

Chapter End Notes

Google Translate

inconnu - unknown/stranger (French, because it doesn't have Louisiana Creole)

Journey Through the Bayou

Chapter Summary

More information on Wilhelm's past... and learning of his ties to the Pack.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will curled in the rear of the boat, his eyes screwed tightly shut, thick-lensed glasses resting on his lap as he pressed his hands over his throbbing eyes. *'Damnit Lopez, couldn't you at least attempt to mute your hatred?'*

He grimaced and opened his eyes, catching the glaring pair of Lopez before him by mistake, *"Freak. Why does the Captain even put up with him anyway? He's as bad as the Dark Creatures he's so fond of."* She let out a huff and sneered at him, "What do you want Graves?"

Will grimaced and replaced the glasses over him eyes, turning to gaze out over the twisting waterways around them, "Nothing of relevance Lopez." He raised his gaze to the prow where Bleiz stood carefully balanced as he poled their way around the various blockages in the waterway, "How fairs the Pack?"

Bleiz let out a low huff, "Not as bad as it could be? The twins were talking about a strange smell on the edge of the Territory a few days back, but we couldn't find any sign of it." He sighed, "Louis and his," he paused, picking his words, "*team*, are still out looking for any sign."

Will sighed, sharp eyes picking out the movement of others pacing them on foot through the swamp, "Warn him to be careful. If it's the same man we're searching for, it would pay to be wary."

Bleiz tensed, "That bad?"

Will snorted, "Remember when we met?"

"How could I forget? You were the tiniest little bundle of vitriol. Papa said you ran afoul of a Voodoo Priestess, which is frankly kind of impressive." He shrugged, muscles rippling beneath his ragged shirt, "You were skin and bone. Frankly I'm surprised you healed anywhere near as quickly as you did."

"Well, let's just say, that what said Priestess wanted to do to me is nowhere near as bad as our targets actions back in England."

Bleiz froze, turning momentarily to shoot Will a horrified look, “She wanted to sacrifice you Will!”

“Aye.” Will let himself meet his friend’s eyes, letting the wash of *horror/shock/pity/fear* sweep over him, “And I’d still rather that than what he’s done.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for chapter lengths, it just isn't lending itself to longer chapters at this point :(

Meeting the Elders

Chapter Summary

Will and Lopez gain an audience with the Alpha and her Pack Elders.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Bleiz navigated the canoe out of the trees, into a large lagoon, with an islet looming out of the middle of the dark water. Tangled trees shadowed overhead as the canoe was swiftly lashed to a root at the edge of the islet. Lopez sneered and launched herself off of the canoe, wand bared. Will exchanged a long-suffering look with Bleiz before following in her footsteps, leaving his wand in its place, hidden in the sheath on his arm. He grasped her wand arm and pressed it to her side, "Remember, I know what we're walking into." He shot her a wry smile, "Follow my lead." He stepped aside and let Bleiz pass, leading them along the winding path through the mangroves, to the bared clearing in the centre.

Lopez let out a shocked gasp, at the sight of a large manor hidden in the midst of the swamp, "How?"
Will smiled faintly, "The Laws restraining those termed as Dark weren't always as harsh as they are now. The Manor was built in the early days, before MACUSA was forged." He grimaced, and removed his glasses once more, slipping them within his robes. His gaze promptly dropped to a deferential position as a tall, African woman stepped from the porch of the building before them. "Alpha Mariloup." He inclined his head in a shallow bow, but did not bare his neck. "Thank you for agreeing to meet."

She let out a huff of air, baring her neck in a rough jerk of her head, "Fleascán-Son. It has been a long time since one of your ilk has brought strangers into my lands. You'd best have a good reason for this."

"Are the Elders present?"

The Alpha froze, giving him an assessing look, "That bad?"

Bleiz sighed, "Alpha?" At her nod, he continued, "He said he would have preferred to allow the means under which he first encountered the Pack to have had a more *tragic* end than to fall victim to the man they hunt."

She turned to stare at them, wary concern plain on her face, "Is this true?"

Will raised his eyes to meet hers, a faint tinge of gold tinting his blue irises as he met her gaze, swallowing down the rush of *affection/horror/fear* and spoke in a rough voice, "Aye

Alpha. I would be concerned if he were merely a man." He swallowed roughly, and then spoke in a snarling tone, "But he is souillé."

Both Loup-Garou stared at him at that, Bleiz giving voice to the opinion they both shared, *"Merde!"*

Will huffed a pained laugh, "Aye." He gave a wincing smile, "May we present our information before the Elders?"

The Alpha sighed, "I think you'd best. Come." She led the way back up the creaking steps of the Manor, and into the building itself, into a room that would be a ballroom in most plantation homes, but here was filled with a number of armchairs and soft furnishings in an oddly harmonious blend of priceless antiques, and flea market finds. She gave a single imperious gesture, and the cluster of teens and children fled the room, leaving a group of six adults, all of whom looked to be somewhere between sixty and ninety years old if judged by No-Maj standards, but were likely far older.

The Alpha took a seat amongst the group, and Bleiz moved to lean solidly the back of her chair. Will gave a mental prayer that Lopez would behave herself, and rolled his arms outward, allowing them to see he was presently weaponless, before sinking to a seat on a couch in front of them. Lopez gave a low snarl, and flounced into a seat slightly further away, her hand positioned to allow her to release her wand as promptly as possible. The Elders gave Will a look of approval, but proceeded to ignore Lopez's presence entirely. The Alpha spoke then, "What news do you wish to share with us, Fleascán-Son Wilhelm?"

Will sighed, his eyes shuttering momentarily, before he began to speak in a soft voice that Lopez had never heard from his lips before, but that the eight present Loup-Garou could easily make out if the expressions of disgust that proceeded across their faces as he spoke his tale were any sign. "I assume the Pack is aware of the Dark Lord currently running around in Magical Britain?" At the brief nod from one of the Elders, he continued, "The Auror Office was informed that he has sent one of his recruits, a souillé naming himself Fenrir Greyback, to recruit the Packs to his service." A snarl emanated from one of the Elders, his dark eyes flashing golden as his wolf surged to the surface. Will let out a pained chuckle, "Oh, it gets worse. He is my distant Cousin by way of my Great Great Grandfather's Non-Magical sister. As such, he was as much born to the position of Fleascán-Son as I. But he refused the title, insisting that such an *injustice* was not to be born."

Bleiz spoke up then, "Injustice?"

Will snorted, "From what the Family understands, he rejects the fact that none of our House is able to fully claim the Heritage of our Line. He sought a *short-cut* to become what the Line of Fleascán once was. He sought out the souillé of Britain, unfortunately once was foolish enough to give him the Bite. He has been a plague to Britain ever since, with a particular *predilection* for turning cubs." At the rumbling snarl emanating from the Loup-Garou before him, Lopez tensed, and her wand slipped into her hand, earning her a sharp glare from the still calm Beta leaning on the back of his Alpha's chair. Will merely sighed, "Aye. But Auror Lopez and I have been assigned to track him down."

One of the Elders, a woman with long grey braids threaded through with bones and feathers, spoke then, her voice soft and gentle, in contrast to the warrior's scars patterning her skin, "Be careful Fleascán-Son."

Her blind eyes met his, and he relaxed under the soothing sensation of Occlumency shields, before addressing her words, "Oh?"

"The Bones tell me a change is coming for you." A concerned look spread across her face, "I doubt it is the form of change you would welcome Wilhelm. Be careful, for blood and pain lie on your path."

Will grimaced but nodded slowly, "My gratitude for the warning Alcmene. I will do what I can, but you know better than I that not all change can be avoided." He lowered his gaze, "From what I know of the beast, I suspect that Greyback will have a harsher impact on the Pack and the other Peoples of Louisiana if I avoid that which you have Seen." Alcmene inclined her head in a slow nod, but spoke no further. Will turned back to the Alpha, "Alpha Mariloup, I thank you for your grace in allowing us to warn you and yours." He rose and beckoned for Lopez to follow him from the house, where he promptly took a seat on the bottom step, smiling faintly at the sound of raised voices in the room they'd just left.

Lopez shot him a dirty look, "What are we doing Graves?"

"Waiting to learn what their plan is, so that we know how we will need to act ourselves."

Chapter End Notes

Google Translate - French

merde - shit
souillé - defiled/tainted one

Fenrir Leaves a Message

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Lopez shot Will a sneer and got up to pace around the clearing, shooting disgusted looks at the collection of children playing a modified form of baseball off to one side. Will just shook his head, leaning back on his elbows, glasses still off, letting the watery sun warm his face. The children suddenly fell silent, turning as one, amber eyes fixing themselves on the south side of the clearing. Will launched himself to his feet, darting into the trees, shouting back over his shoulder to Lopez, “Stay here!” He ducked under the branches of the mangroves overhead, and wove his way through the intricate roots, emerging into a small clearing, at the edge of Pack land, holding a tall, darkly tanned man, with close-cropped brown hair, and a pair of small Asian teenagers, who turned on him with snarls on their lips. The eldest of them froze, “Wilhelm?”

Will nodded, his blue eyes bleeding more and more gold from the pupil as he scanned around them, fixing his eyes on the corpse at their feet, “What happened?”

Mariloup and Bleiz emerged from the underbrush, Lopez at their heels, as Louis went to respond, “We don’t know.” He jerked his head at the twins, “We were trying to track whatever it was that they smelt, and we wound up here. She was already dead.”

Lopez sneered, “Like we believe that.”

Will sighed, and just ignored her, and the snarls her comment elicited, squatting down and examining the corpse, “I seriously doubt a Loup-Garou did this.”

Bleiz squatted at his side, “What do you see?”

Will winced, eyes flickering shut, “I’m hunting. *No*.” He shook his head, “I’m looking for something. Someone? I can feel the moon’s call. Pain running through my veins. It’s *ecstasy*.” His eyes flickered open, and he stood pacing across the clearing, crouching behind a trampled cluster of wild blackberry. “I trace the scent of wolf here. I wait. There’s a sound. A scent of…” He inhaled heavily, eyes almost fully golden, “fruit on the air. Mangoes? No. Pineapple.” He eyes slid closed again, missing the look of horror flickering across Lopez’s face, “She screams so beautifully. I leave her here as a message. This is my design.” Will stood, walking back over to the others, his face curiously blank, “Roll her over.”

Lopez and Mariloup stared as one, “What?”

Will sighed, “Roll her over. Fenrir left a message.”

Lopez stared at him, “So sure it’s him? Sounds more like you did it.”

Will shot her a pained look, automatically filtering out the sensations of *fear/horror/hate* bubbling at the borders of her mind, “If I did it, I wouldn’t be so foolish as to reveal my

motivations, would I? Besides, most of the Pack know my scent, and the Enforcers all know my Magical Signature. It would be eminently foolish of me to kill on their lands." He gave her a savage grin, and turned back to the corpse, which Bleiz and Louis had carefully rolled over, revealing her naked back. A skull emblazoned just below her shoulder blades, a snake emerging from its mouth. Will shot Lopez a look, "Still doubt me?"

"Fuck." She stared at the necrotizing flesh in horror, "We're going to have to tell the Captain."

"Aye." Will scanned over it. "Does it look odd to you?"

One of the twins frowned, "You mean aside from the fact it looks to be rotting already?"

Will stepped closer, focusing on the wound, "Yes, there's something else." He frowned, holding his hand scarcely an inch above the wound, "*Oh.* That's clever."

Lopez crouched, willing to trust him in this, knowing it for his area of expertise, "Oh?"

"Maltrust ward." He shot her a toothy grin, "I haven't seen one of these in *years*." He saw their puzzled looks, "It's something written for the Old Wars between the Packs." He grimaced, "This one I saw in the Family Grimoire. Alyona Esfir Romanova married into House Fleascán in the Fifteenth Century. Her Family was heavily involved in the Russian Pack Wars, and this particular ward was part of their Family Magics. Luckily for me, she was the Last of the Family, so it got assimilated into the Fleascán knowledge base."

Lopez stared at him, "Why would he use it, if he knows you're here?"

Will snorted, and continued delicately unpicking the magic of the ward, "He doesn't." At her confused look, he elaborated. "I'm classed as a Half-blood, yes. But not only was my mother a No-Maj and my father a Squib, both of his parents were also Squibs. As far as he's aware, my branch of the Family Tree is non-existent. Which is exceedingly fortunate, as you clearly demonstrated upon encountering the corpse."

Lopez gave a very convincing sneer, "*What?* And why are you a Graves then?"

Will relaxed, letting the threads of Magic fade, "The ward's neutralised." He gave her a sad smile, "As it is a part of my Family Magic, even if only by adoption, it holds no effect on me." He glanced at the listening Loup-Garou, "It binds the Pack to keep the knowledge hidden out of fear, and ensures any non-Pack, believe the worst of the Pack. It's generally used to isolate one from their allies." He snorted, "He is going to be rather irked when he realises that it didn't work." Turning to Lopez, "I'm a Graves, because our Squibs always take the Name of Graven. Dad insisted I default back to Graves when I got my Ilvermorny invite." He glanced at Mariloup, "I suggest you ensure no one goes anywhere alone for the next while."

She stared at him, surprise and shock tinting her voice as she replied, "I think that might be for the best. *Thank* you."

Will just gave her a pained smile, and extended an arm to Lopez, “Keep the crime scene safe, we’ll be back with analysts shortly.” And they apparated.

Chapter End Notes

Mind letting me know what you think? I'm not sure if the background tying the Hannibal characters in is necessary or not, but I'd appreciate hearing what others think.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Back to the Office.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will staggered slightly on landing, crashing to the ground when Lopez shoved him away from her. He stared up at her through still-bare eyes, seeing the *disgust/horror/fear* crawling through her mind. “Stay the fuck away from me if you know what’s good for you Graves.”

He stared blankly up at her, “We’re supposed to be working on this together, Lopez.” He froze, a wave of *annoyance/amusement/pity* sweeping over him, and turned his head to the left, pulling himself to a seated position, “Captain.”

Lopez froze, spinning to face the annoyed expression of their Captain as he strode across the apparition point to where they’d landed, “Lopez. Graves.” He held a hand out to Will, pulling him upright, but releasing it as soon as humanly possible, “You find anything?”

Lopez sneered at Will, “Graves spoke to the wolves. They found a body, but are claiming they had nothing to do with it.”

“Graves?”

Will grimaced, pulling his glasses back onto his face, “Alpha Mariloup accepted our warning. While we were awaiting the Council’s decision as to the actions they will be taking, I noticed the children reacting to an alert through their Pack Bonds. I cast a wide-ranging hominem revelio, and used it to locate the site of the alert. Enforcer Louis and his team were standing at the border of the Pack Grounds with a body. Lopez followed me with the Alpha and her Beta. It immediately devolved into an argument, but I noticed a Maltrust ward manipulated into an unusual and Dark brand worked into the body’s back. As it was a piece of Family Magic, I unwove it. Lessening hostilities. Lopez and I then returned here in search of an analyst.”

“And the killer?”

“Other than myself, there are only four people with a strong enough tie to the Family to use the Family Magics. Arthur is crippled, Rolf is twelve, and Tristan is sixteen, and currently in France at Beauxbatons. God help us, the only other is Fenrir.” He swallowed harshly, “And despite what Lopez would like to think… I not only *was not* the killer. I also have an alibi for last night.” He shot Lopez a dark glare, “Given that I was stuck in the office filing the paperwork for the Scarpetti Heist all night.”

“Right. Take Jones, and get back there. Find him.”

Will jerked his head in a nod, and led Lopez back into the building in search of their assigned analyst.

Chapter End Notes

This is surprisingly awkward to write, I think there'll be mainly short chapters for most parts that don't involve violence. Dammit.

Fish Moon

Will stumbled into his apartment in a ramshackle area of New Orleans in one of the Non-Magical districts. He let out a ragged groan, tossing his glasses onto the benchtop as he staggered through his kitchenette, collapsing on the bed as soon as he got near enough. *'Fucking Hell.'* He rolled over, burying his head under the pillow, attempting to smother his headache beneath the ragged cotton. *'What the fuck did I ever do to Lopez?'* He lay there, unmoving, before he finally dropped off to sleep.

The beast paced relentlessly. Back and forth. Back and forth. It snarled at the tarnished silver bars restraining it within it's cage. 'Kill. Blood. Feed.' *Will cringed at the bloodthirsty thoughts echoing from its divided mind, as it through itself at the bars. Bloody foam sprayed from its fangs, snapping close before his face.* 'Kill you!'

Its gaze snapped away from him, as a door on the other side of its cage slowly swung open. It flashed him a toothy grin, and slipped out through the door. The iron and copper smell of blood emanated from the open door. Screams echoed back to Will from the same place.

Will let out a low groan of pleasure. The taste of blood was rich in his mouth, as he threw his head back, howling at the moon above. He lowered his gaze to the carcass before him. The Hispanic female had been worthy prey, but all prey was food in the end, whether they be Wizard or Muggle. He let out a low chuffing sound, and buried his fangs in her flesh, ignoring the terrified pain in her quickly fading eyes.

Will shot upright on a scream, and scanned the room with panicking, unseeing eyes. He calmed himself slightly, and buried his head in his hands on a sob. *'No! Not again! I won't let him win! I can't!'* He let out a hiccupping sob, and clambered from the bed. Moving to the window, he stared at the burgeoning Fish Moon. *'Three days. Three days before Fenrir becomes the beast in full.'* He let out a deep sigh, tears trailing down his flushed face, *'If we*

don't catch him before then… Gods… the horrors he will unleash.' He shuddered and yanked his robes back on, leaving his apartment and dashing back to work.

Fenrir Emerges

Chapter Summary

Fenrir seeks out the Prey who unravelled his wards...

Chapter Notes

Switching viewpoints with each paragraph sorry, starts with Will's...

Will strode from the Auror Office later that day, a pained grimace distorting his face, *'Is it really that hard to fathom that the so-called Beasts are just as deserving of life as humans? Idiots.'* A shiver ran down his spine as he slipped past an alleyway. Turning to look, he got a glimpse of gold eyes, before the bearer disappeared into the shadows. *'Fuck.'* Will spun on his heel, dashing off in pursuit… pocketing his glasses as he ran, wand still sheathed due to his presence in Muggle New Orleans. A snarl slipped from his lips as he came to a halt, "Fuck!"

A low growling voice spoke from the shadows beside him, as a high-level Dark concealing charm dropped to reveal a tall, broad figure with features distorted by many years of living feral, "So you're the one hunting me…"

Will grimaced, catching the eyes of the harsh figure before him, *'Blood. Fresh… sweet. Prey.'* He let out a huff of mock amusement, "Sorry. Who are you?" He gave his best innocent look… drawing a snarl of anger from the lips of the werewolf before him. "I mean… I'm an Auror… I hunt a lot of people… thieves, burglars and the like. Which were you?"

Fenrir took a threatening step forward, disconcerted when the prey's only reaction was to arch an eyebrow, glasz eyes shifting from mirrorlike silver, to gain a trail of sparking amber. "I could kill you now Little Human."

The prey snorted, "You could try, Bitten One. But then you would never learn how I unpicked your ward… or why it is that the Pack called me in when you did such a good job of exacerbating the distrust they and the Aurors hold for each other." A smirk spread across their lips, as they took a step forward, their whiskey and blood scent drifting towards Fenrir with the movement, wand still sheathed at their wrist. "Killing me would only leave you with your questions unanswered… and the Packs would most certainly rip you to shreds if I were to die."

Fenrir snarled, calling his bluff, “And why is that?”

The prey laughed, stepping within arm’s reach, “Ask around, find out why it is that the Caplata avoid me and mine.” He snorted. Fenrir snarled, and dove at him, teeth bared, but the prey pivoted on one heel, gripping Fenrir’s outstretched arm and using his own force to toss him down the alley, “You’re not the first ‘Wolf I’ve fought.”

The prey sank into a fighting stance as Fenrir pulled himself upright, a short silver blade emerging from a sheath on his off-arm. Fenrir snarled, “You’ll regret coming after me, Little Prey.” He spun and darted deeper into the alley, disappearing from sight, the wards dropping as their caster cut the connection.

Will watched his cousin disappear into the bowels of the city. “Great.” He glanced down at the scratch mark on his wrist, dripping essence of dittany onto the scarring wound, “This is going to go down well on my report.” He grimaced at the stinging sensation, “Eudoxia is going to be *thrilled.*” He sighed and let his wand slip from it’s sheath, “Expecto Patronum.” A large, shaggy wolfdog erupted from his wandtip, and he crouched before it, “Auror Lopez. I encountered the target. He got away. I’ve activated the tracker in my badge if you wish to inspect the location.” The Patronus bowed it’s silver head and darted away, masked by it’s very nature from No-Maj sight. *‘This is going to go* so *well.’* He ran his fingers through his tousled hair and waited for his partner to arrive.

Issues Deepen

Chapter Summary

...in which Fenrir's Depravities are further touched upon.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"Graves." Lopez sneered at him, "One of your *beasts* attack you?"

Will arched an eyebrow, "Hardly, Eudoxia. No, Greyback elected to draw me out… needless to say I'm not as weak as he expected." A frown spilled across his lips as he watched the Wardsniffers comb the alley, "He intends to make me a target however… just not for his human form."

A snort spilled from her lips, "And you have a problem joining your *friends* why?"

A snarl came from the entrance to the alley, causing Will to raise a hand in warning, "Leave it be, Bleiz. She'll believe what she will… it's not our responsibility to convince her otherwise."

The lean form of Mariloup's Beta stepped into view, "It smells of Bitten here."

Will snorted at that, "Yes, well Greyback did elect to corner me here. No wonder it smells of him." He pushed the glasses up his nose, frowning at the Loup-Garou, "Everything alright with the Pack? You look worried."

A low growl spilled from his lips, "We heard back from the others. Turns out the girl wasn't Greyback's first victim since his arrival."

Lopez raised an eyebrow, "*Really*? And we believe you…"
Will glared at her, cutting her off, "How many Bleiz?"

"Sixteen, and a trio of newly Bitten boys. Turns out he's been here longer than you thought."

"*Fuck*." A pained expression spread over Will's face. "Where are they?"

"The Cheyenne Pack took them in. The Alpha's Mate is a former Bitten. They'll have better luck helping them adapt than the rest of us."

"You question them?"

Bleiz shook his head, "The oldest is six, Will."

Lopez lost her sneer at that, “The youngest?”

“Survivor? Three. Of the dead, both of the parents of the children were attacked with the Moon… they just didn’t survive their wounds… and since they were First Gens…”

Will grimaced, “Pack Law claims them.”

“Exactly.” At Lopez’ confused look, Bleiz expanded, “If a child is turned, and they have guardians in the know about the Magical World, the local Pack makes contact if they know of the incident. If the guardians are No-Maj, then the local Pack is automatically granted primary custody, assuming of course that the parents died in the attack. If the parents survive, they’re offered a partial membership in the Pack… or the chance to surrender custody and have their memory of the attack replaced by the local Obliviator Squad with a memory of the child being attacked by a wild dog, and giving them up for adoption in reaction to the scars.”

Will grimaced, “The parents usually choose to give up the child. I think I can name maybe one in the last five years who chose to retain custody, and the father left them in reaction.” He gave Lopez a pained look, “Usually Magicals choose to give the child to the Packs as well. It’s rare in the extreme for them to be willing to deal with the results.” He turned to the waiting Wardsniffer, “Well?”

“No magical trace, Auror Graves.” A pained expression crossed the woman’s shrewish face.

Bleiz shrugged, “Wolves, whether Loup-Garou or Were, are generally better at hiding their tracks than men.”

Will sighed, “True. But Greyback has a reputation for making a mess. I was hoping he wasn’t aware of that particular trick.”

Lopez froze, “They can do *what*?”
Will shrugged, “Predators, Lopez. They may not consume humans, but the Loup-Garou and their ilk evolved when this was a far more primitive world… being able to slip away from their more magical prey when needed was a necessary skill, which eventually became a gift of the Bloodlines, before Lycaon’s Curse was first detected.”

Chapter End Notes

According to Behindthename:

Eudoxia: From Greek ευδοξια (eudoxia) meaning "good repute, good judgement", itself from ευ (eu) "good" and δοξα (doxa) "notion, reputation, honour".

Devolution

Chapter Summary

Greyback takes down another victim... Will is starting to stress...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The young girl swung on her swing at the edge of the dirt yard, her long dark hair braided with flowers and blowing back in two tails as she approached the pinnacle of the creaking chains. She let out a high scream of excitement as gravity yanked her back down through her arc. The sweet scent of joy and happiness pooled in the humid air… a feral grin spread across the lips of the predator lurking in the bushes, his golden eyes glowing bright in the darkness. As the girl dropped down in the next swooping arc of the swing, he ripped her from her seat, dragging her into the gloaming before she had a chance to scream… her blue eyes widening in terror.

Will stared in horror at the sight before his eyes. Lopez having turned to vomit in the bushes behind him. He listened absently as she turned to the man who'd reported finding the body whilst searching for potions ingredients, "Did you see any sign of anything that could have done this?"

"No Ma'am."

Will crouched before the shredded corpse, tucking his glasses into his pocket as he did so, a predatory light glowing in his suddenly golden eyes as he inhaled, *'Sweet scent… delicious… prey… rend… tear…'* He jolted upright, ripping his eyes away from the body. "Fuck."

Lopez froze, "What? What did you sense?"

"He's devolving." Will swallowed harshly, jamming his glasses back on his face as he tried to block the scene from his senses, "His prey drive has ramped up, but he's slacking the reins on his control."

Bleiz froze from where he was trying to scent the scene, "You're sure?"

“He ripped her apart because his beast was hungry Bleiz. He wasn’t trying to Turn her.” Will fixed his gaze on the desecrated body of the child before him, “She’s only seven years old Bleiz… even a Bitten wouldn’t see her as a threat. Try to Turn? Certainly. But to kill for the sake of killing? Never.”

“Shit. Want me to warn the Pack?”

Will grimaced, “Tell them to raise the Wards and lock down the Boundaries. If he comes across any of them at this point, he’ll rip them apart just as he would any of us.” He pinched his nose, “Better to ensure that none of the Packs can be blamed for his actions. Have the Goblins check your Ward Schema if you can to verify that they’re locked down. That way they can confirm if any of them are triggered or deactivated while we hunt Greyback.”

Lopez shot him a look, “That’s possible?”

Will snorted, “The Loup-Garou have been in this country longer than the White Man have, Lopez. The only reason the Fleascán Line gained the status it did is due to the status they already had overseas. They were warriors, first and foremost, but they were known for knowing when *not* to fight just as they did when *to*.” He grimaced, “Most of the Pack Wards were set up using the Old Ways, and still stand today.” He glanced at where Bleiz was sending a Patronus in the direction of the Pack Lands, “You’re not going?”

He snorted, “You may be human Wilhelm, but you’re just as much my Family as the Pack is. Mari-Loup can deal with the Goblins and all. I’ll stand with you.”

Will turned back to the girl, “Do we know who she is?”

“Gabrielle Voclain. No-Maj. Her parents reported her missing last night when she didn’t show up for dinner.”

Bleiz glanced from her to the corpse, “You sure?”

“Yes.” Lopez’s face was set, “She had a rather distinctive birthmark which Greyback was *kind* enough to leave undamaged.”

Will grimaced, “I’d wondered why her left thigh was unmarred. There’s a lot of flesh there for a predator.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay, it's surprisingly hard for me to slip into Will's mindset enough to write chapters for this story.

Canis lupus rufus

Chapter Summary

...plans are deduced, countermeasures are plotted.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will sat next to Bleiz at a conference table in Auror Headquarters, as his Lopez summarised what had so far been discovered in their investigation. His boss turned to face the two of them at last, “So what’s his plan now then, if he’s *devolving* as you claim.”

Bleiz grimaced, “If he were a normal predator, he’d be holing up. The amount of flesh he took from that girl should take him at least a day or so to digest.”

Will grimaced and spoke over the murmurs of disgust, “Unfortunately, it’s unlikely he’ll do that.” He fixed his gaze on where his hands rested on the table, “Most likely, he’ll find a place with as many potential victims as possible and hole up somewhere there until Moonrise.” He swallowed harshly, “He has no care for keeping the Statute. He wants to force the Loup-Garou to support his so-called Lord. To do that, he has to ensure that they feel like doing so would gain them something. In this case, he’s trying to force us to crack down on them, to make us drive them to him and his cause.”

“Shit.”

Will chanced a look up, and shot his boss a wry smile, “Exactly.”

Auror Smith cocked his head, “When even is the Full Moon?”

Bleiz grimaced, “Tomorrow night.”

At the grimaces spreading around the table, Will interrupted, “It gets worse. The No-Maj have a big festival planned then as well. Given the comparative lack of security to the Magical World, I’d expect that to be his target.”

Jones raised a crimson brow at that, “The Blues Festival?” At Will’s nod, she grimaced, “They’re expecting a massive turnout.”

“Shit.” Captain Collins muttered under his breath.

Will and Bleiz exchanged a look, Will giving him a nod, before speaking up, “Beta Bleiz has informed his Alpha of the situation. She has been asked to close the Wards and spread the warning, to ensure that we don’t have to worry about Greyback attempting to take Sanctuary

among the Loup-Garou. With any luck, Bleiz will be the only one out and about after Moonrise."

Simmons snorted, "And what about when he transforms? Not afraid he'll attack us?"

Bleiz gave him a toothy grin, "Only if you ask nicely." He shot Will a glare as he felt a foot stomp on his own, "We're little different from Animagi under the Moon's influence. Unless you're a Mate, you wouldn't be turned by a Bite from a Loup-Garou, only the Bitten carry that taint. I may be forced to remain in my Lupine form after Moonrise, but my mind remains just as intact as ever."

The captain sighed, "Partner up. We'll patrol in pairs." He gave them all a dark look, "If any of you see…" He glanced at Bleiz, "…or sense, Greyback, alert the others."

Will glanced around the room, watching as the others armed themselves, and partnered up. He gave a muffled sigh, causing Bleiz to snort, "Eudoxia, how about you go with Ethan? I can take Bleiz." Lopez gave him a sharp nod and wandered over to join Simmons. Will turned back to Bleiz, "Want to shift? You'll have to in a few hours anyway."

Bleiz cocked his head, giving him an assessing look, before scanning his eyes over the rest of the room, "And it has nothing to do with ensuring they don't mistake me for Greyback?"

"Perhaps a little. We are all allies today after all."

Bleiz gave him a toothy smile, "Very well then." He cracked his spine, and toed off his shoes, pulling his shirt off and piling it on top as he did so. At Lopez's shout of disgust, he snorted, "Just be grateful we finally worked out a way for us to keep pants when we shift." He let out a heavy groaning noise, and they stared as he fell to his knees, his body shifting even as he fell, until a red wolf stood at Will's side. His russet fur interrupted only by the canvas collar fastened around his neck. He dropped into a lunge, and yawned, before straightening back up.

Will gave the two foot tall creature a fond look, "Show-off."

The captain stared at the two for a moment, "Right." He glanced around the room, "Beta Bleiz is an ally. If I learn he came to any harm by your wands I will be *most* aggravated." He focused on Lopez and Simmons for a moment, before continuing, "And remember Auror Graves' Animagus form is that of a German Shepherd… do try not to mistake either of them for Greyback."

Lopez snorted, "Why would he be in Animagus form?"

Will arched a brow, "Maybe because a Werewolf Bite doesn't affect an Animagus if they're not in their human form? If it comes down to hand-to-hand, I would rather not risk catching Lycaon's Curse." He paused, "If it's any help… Greyback may look similar to us in terms of general form, but those tainted with Lycaon's Curse always take the form of the Eurasian

Wolf when in their natural form." He rubbed his forehead, "Given that he's welcomed the *curse* part of the Curse… he'll be closest to the description in the textbooks you studied during the Dark Creatures part of the Auror Program. Half-man and half-wolf. It should be easy enough to tell the difference between him and us." He glanced at Bleiz for a moment, "The only time a Bitten takes a more natural form, is when they join a Loup-Garou pack and gradually become one of the Line. Even then, they always take the form of a Eurasian Wolf."

Chapter End Notes

According to Google, the Baton Rouge Blues Festival was first held in 1981, and while I can't actually find the date/s for the original festival... I'm making the executive decision that it was held on April 19th, which is when the Fish Moon apparently was for that year :)

...and my reasoning for wolf species, is that Lycaon was Greek, so those who inherited his curse would naturally gain the form of the Greek Wolf, which is apparently the Eurasian Wolf. The Loup-Garou tend to take the form of the other Wolf Species, unless they have a Bitten or a Once-Bitten in their Line... in which case they take the form of a hybrid of the natural species in their genetic make-up.

Confrontations

Chapter Summary

Greyback makes his move, Will gets hurt

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will grimaced, buffeted by the unrelenting emotions of the crowd. Bleiz whined at his feet, recognising the scent of his distress. “It’s fine, Bleiz.” He pushed his glasses further up his nose, “Just too many people is all.” He ran a hand over his face, “Anything smell out of place?” At the lack of response, he sighed, and they continued walking, stopping at a cart so Will could buy them a handful of crawfish cakes to split.

Bleiz let out a low whine, drawing Will’s attention… “Shit.” The moon was visible as it slowly rose above the roofline of the buildings around. Will raised the walky-talky’s the team had been provided before they left, “Moonrise.”

There was the sound of several muffled invectives over the broadwave, before the Captain took over, “Anyone seen any sign of him yet?”

After the resounding no’s of the others, Will answered, “No sign. Bleiz hasn’t caught his scent either.” Even as he spoke, Bleiz let out a low rumbling growl, causing Will to tense, and scan the crowd, “Belay that. Bleiz has something.”

“Shit. On our way Graves.”

“Thanks Lopez.”

Bleiz took off at a lunging run, diving through a thicket of people, clustered around one of the booths… Will hot on his tail. A piercing scream echoed from ahead, causing Will to swear and run faster. He broke through the crowd to see Bleiz crouched low, trying to keep himself between a fully transformed ‘wolf and a group of drunk No-Maj. “*Merde.*” Will raised his radio, even as Bleiz lunged, snapping at Greyback’s throat to keep him back. “He’s here. Follow the screams, I’m shifting.” Will let the radio drop to the ground and ducked behind a booth, lunging out the other side on four feet. He fell into formation with Bleiz, working to

keep Greyback corralled. *'Shit. Shit. Fuck.'* He dodged the swipe of one massive hand, Bleiz using it as a distraction to get close enough to bite at Greyback's heels from behind. *'Where the fuck are they?'* Bleiz let out a yelp as he misjudged his dodge out of range, and Will let out a loud snarl, fixing his strange blue-grey gaze on Greyback's own amber ones… challenging him.

Greyback let out a howl, relishing in the joy of the Moon's pull in his veins. The pathetic prey screamed and ran from him. He gave chase, but a lowly wolf dove in front of him, driving him back. He refocused on the wolf before him, trying to get a grip on it so he could shred it for daring to interfere in *his* hunt. He managed to swipe the mutt's muzzle, but froze for a moment, as he caught a whiff of the prey from the alley, only to snarl as the scent warped and a Animagus mutt dove into the fight, aligning itself with the Loup-Garou. He snarled, and lunged towards it, but twisted around as he felt the wolf sink its fangs into the back of his legs, managing to toss it several feet to the side.

The mutt snarled and met his gaze with odd silver eyes… carrying the Moon's pull within them. Greyback abandoned the downed wolf and refocussed on the mutt before him, a thin line of saliva dripping from his fangs and splashing to the ground as they met eyes. Neither one moved as they each waited for the other to break the stalemate. Lucidity emerging from the Moon's pull at the sure knowledge of the threat standing before him. Skin-clad prey emerged from the crowd who'd begun to gather, some pausing to shoe them away, others standing hesitant behind the mutt.

Will perked up, as he caught the scents of his co-workers as they fell into formation around them, *'About bloody time.'* He held Greyback's gaze, knowing full well the hypnotising effect his gaze had on Bleiz and his Pack, and praying that the trait held true for his Bitten cousin.

Bleiz drew himself to his feet, whimpering as he stumbled on one leg.

Will tensed as Greyback broke his gaze, drawn to the noise of pain Bleiz had unintentionally released, *'Bloody hell.'* He let out a snarling growl and lunged, even as Greyback lunged for Bleiz, landing on Greyback's back and using his weight to buy Bleiz enough time to dodge. Will dug his fangs into the back of Greyback's throat as Bleiz dodged behind the Aurors, knowing he was more of a hindrance than aid now.

Will noticed out of the corner of his eyes that the Aurors were readying the Silver Web spell to hold Greyback in place, and tensed his muscles, making ready to leap off. Greyback seemed to tense even as he did so though, and with a sudden lunge, tossed Will off his back. Will rolled to his feet, and assessed in seconds where the 'wolf was aiming himself, and threw his canine body between Lopez and the snapping jaws, smashing her head into the cobbles, and letting out a howl of agony as the fangs clamped down on his already bruised side. Even as he howled, he heard "Argentum telam," from a chorus of voices, conjuring a brilliant silver net that pulled Greyback away from where he lay bleeding atop of Lopez, ripping a great chunk out of his side as it did so. He felt a pained whine slip from between his fangs as a figure approached, and he fell into blackness, slumping slackly against Lopez's unconscious body.

Chapter End Notes

Google Translate:

argentum telam - silver web (Latin)

Probably just one more chapter, then it's just Darkling in this 'verse... until I get to the sequels of course :)

Loss, and the Seeds of the Pack...

Chapter Summary

> Will finally leaves New Orleans behind himself, and casts Wilhelm Graves aside as he does so...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will groaned as he came to, the familiar quiet hum of the hospital telling him he'd been transported while he was unconscious. Bleiz's familiar voice drew him fully out of his slumber, "So, do you want the good news or the bad news?"

Will groaned, meeting Bleiz's eyes, fighting back the sensation of *fear/worry/affection/loyalty* that swept over him as he did so. "Both?" he asked in a voice hoarse from lack of use.

"Right…" Bleiz grimaced, "Greyback has been transported back to England for them to deal with. Apparently he escaped shortly after arrival though." At Will's incredulous look, he continued, "Oh, it gets better… not. You've been confirmed free of infection, not that anyone doubted it." He rolled his eyes, "But the idiots in your Auror office have 'released you of your duties' since anyone bitten by a 'wolf is unable to be a member of the Auror Corps, regardless of if they've turned or not. Idiots."

"Lopez?"

"Survived without a scratch." He grimaced, "Not that she seems to appreciate it. Smith? I think his name is, and your former boss were the only ones to visit in the last seven months or so."

Will gave him a flat stare, his voice growing shrill, "Seven months?"

Bleiz grimaced, "Afraid so, Will. On the upside, Greyback's 'Lord' has apparently been defeated by a toddler. So, there's that." He flashed Will a smile, "And, surprisingly, you actually healed without any scars… I didn't actually know that was possible with wounds from Bitten."

"Family Magic." Will groaned and closed his eyes, dropping back to sleep. *'Thanks Bleiz.'*

Will stood at the edge of Lulana territory, “Sure we can’t convince you to stay, Wilhelm?” Mariloup watched him with concerned eyes.

“Afraid not, Alpha.” He grimaced, fixing his gaze on the swamp behind her, “I-I can’t stay here. I tried, but…”

She sighed and gave him a gentle nod, “I understand. Know that we’re here if you ever need us though, Wilhelm.”

“I’ll try.” He flicked his eyes to hers, but flinched, even with his glasses on, “The Bite may not have turned me, but it warped my gift. Magic isn’t so comfortable at the moment. The Pack’s better than most… but I think I need to spend some time among the No-Maj.” He flashed her a quick smile, and stepped back out beyond the Wards, onto the gravel lay-by where he’d left his car.

He spun around at the sound of a branch cracking underfoot, to see Bleiz giving him a sad smile, stepping out from behind a tree, a wriggling blue-grey puppy in his arms. “You’re off then?”

“Yeah.”

“Right.” He dumped the pup into Will’s arms, “I figure you’ll probably forget to buy food for yourself, but you shouldn’t forget to feed this little one.” He flashed Will a pained smile, “Maybe then you’ll remember you need to eat too.”

“Bleiz…”

“Take him, Will.” He brushed a hand against Will’s cheek, scent-marking him as he stepped back, “You may not have turned, but I figure you’ll have the Pack-longing even still. If we can’t help you, then maybe he can.” He paused, “He’s a Leopard Dog if you hadn’t guessed.”

Will arched a brow, “Yes, Bleiz, I’m that much of an idiot that I didn’t remember your family has been breeding them for generations. What colour is he?” At Bleiz’s look, he rolled his eyes, “I do need to be able to name it when I register him at the Vet’s, Bleiz.”

His companion snorted, “Blue Merle, mon bien-aimé.” He gave Will a last sad smile, “Safe travels Will. Stay safe.”

Will gave a choked noise as Bleiz disappeared back into the treeline, “Will do.” He gave the pup in his arms a considering look, “What do you say, Conor, shall we get on the road?” He carefully placed the eight-week-old puppy in the floor well on the passenger side, and gave him a couple of coats to curl up in. “I’ll get you some supplies next time we stop.” He ran a hand gently down the dog’s spine, feeling the beginning coil of a familiar bond form as he did so, “Bleiz you arse. You could’ve warned me he was of Taika’s Line.” He snorted, and pulled back onto the road, shaking off the sense of loss as he did so.

Chapter End Notes

Google Translate:
mon bien-aimé - my beloved (French)

Yep, Will had a boyfriend in the Pack... sorry Bleiz.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!